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RECUSANT HISTORY

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FATHER ROBERT PERSONS S.J. AND *THE BOOK OF SUCCESSION*

By L. HICKS S.J.

When Fr. Persons arrived in Rome towards the end of March 1597, he found the unruly students in the English College very averse to Spain and particularly enraged by the *Book of Succession*¹. "They loathed it," he reported to Don Juan de Idiaquez, "and said a thousand evil things about it, though they had never seen or read it, based merely on ill-natured reports received from their partisans in Flanders, saying that it was greatly in favour of the claims of the King of Spain and the Lady Infanta against the King of Scotland and was the prelude to a conquest of England and that Fr. Persons had obtained signatures and oaths from some of the foremost Englishmen in Spain in Favour of the Infanta^{1a}."

This attitude of the students has often been reflected in others since that time who have written of or mentioned the book. Their comments on it suggest that, like the students, they have neither seen nor read it. Still less do they show any knowledge of the circumstances in which it was produced, of the purpose of the book, the documents connected with it or even the date of its publication²

I *The Book itself.*

The work, which is in the form of discourses by a civilian and a temporal lawyer respectively, is divided into two parts, the first of which—the discourse of the civilian lawyer—deals with such matters of political philosophy as the origin of the state, its varying forms, the authority of the ruler, the question of succession and the rights residing in the commonwealth, which may lawfully in certain circumstances depose its head and substitute another. In the matter of succession, nearness of blood has strong arguments in its favour and tends generally to stability of government, but the rule is not absolute nor founded on any law of nature but only on human positive law, and so varies from nation to nation: and even in those states where it usually prevails it has from time to time been disregarded. Other factors have to be considered, the chief of which is religion.

On these questions the book follows the common scholastic doctrine of the state and illustrates its points from the history of various countries. The exposition is really directed against the doctrine of Pierre du Bellay who inculcated the divine right of kings in the two works he wrote to support the claim of

Henry of Navarre to the crown of France³. Whether one agrees with the conclusions of the book or not, it must be admitted that religion was the determining factor in the choice of rulers, not only in France in the sixteenth century — for it was the fundamental cause of the opposition to the succession of Henry of Navarre, which was finally appeased by his conversion to the Catholic faith — but also in England right down to the Act of Settlement in which such great precautions were taken to ensure a Protestant succession to the throne that they are operative even to this day⁴.

The second part of the book, the discourse of the temporal lawyer, deals with the claims of the various pretenders to the succession. In a preliminary chapter he treats of previous works written on the subject, beginning with that of John Sales in 1563 in favour of the house of Suffolk and especially of the children of the Earl of Hertford by Lady Catherine Grey⁵. This was answered both by Morgan who was thought to have written his book by the advice and assistance of Sir Anthony Browne⁶ and by John Leslie, Bishop of Ross, who favoured the claim of the Queen of Scots⁶. Both these claims, that of the house of Suffolk and that of Mary, Queen of Scots, were rejected in a fourth book written by Robert Hightington, secretary in time past to the Earl of Northumberland, which favoured the pretensions of Philip II⁷. A further book, composed in Flanders, which advocated the claims of the Duke of Parma, the lawyer had heard of and though he had not read it, he knew by report the arguments adduced in it. He had also seen the papers of Sir Richard Shelley and the much larger collection of Francis Peto. "There want not also," he adds, "divers in England who have travailed much in this business and have had the perusing of some of their labours though I dare not discover their names lest thereby I should hurt them, which were not convenient⁸."

Of all these books and papers he shrewdly remarks: "but one great truble finde in them all, that every man seeketh to draw the whole water unto his owne mill, and to make that title alwayes most clere, whom he most favoureth, and this with so great probability of reason and authority many tymes, as it is hard to stayne a mans consent from that which is said, until he have read the reasons of the other party, and this also is a great prooffe of the wonderful ambiguity and doubtfulness which in this most important affaire is to be founde⁹."

The lawyer next traces the descent of the kings of England from William the Conqueror to Henry VIII, adding a long discourse as to which of the two

royal houses of Lancaster and York had the better right to the crown by way of succession. The result of his investigation is that historians "do conclude that for all these reasons (adduced in the chapter) and for many more that might be alleaged the title of Lancaster must needes seeme the better title, which they do confirme by the general consent of all the realme at King Henry the seventh his coming in to recover the crowne from the house of Yorke, as from usurpers, for having had the victory against King Richard, they crowned him presently in the field in the right of Lancaster before he married with the house of Yorke, which is a token that they esteemed his title of Lancaster sufficiente of itselfe to beare away the crowne, albeit for better ending of strife, he took to wife also the lady Elizabeth heyre of the house of Yorke¹⁰."

The rest of the book is taken up with the consideration of the claims of ten or so pretenders to the succession, in which arguments for and against each title are expounded. As several of the claimants were aliens, including James VI himself¹¹, the lawyer discusses the question whether it be better to be under a foreign than under a native-born ruler, giving reasons for and against and illustrating the matter from history. He makes the point that what really matters is good government, whether by a native-born ruler or by a foreigner and that in certain circumstances being ruled by a foreigner may be advantageous¹². He concludes that "in respect of the present state of England and as it now standeth, and for the publique good not only of the common subjects but also of the nobility and especially and above others of the English competitors and pretenders that cannot al speede, some external Prince of this tyme, should be admitted upon such compositions and agreements, as both the realme should remayne with her ancient liberties, and perhaps much more than now it enjoyeth (for such Princes commonly and upon such occasions of preferment, would yield to much more in those cases than a homborne Prince would) and the other pretenders at home also, should remayne with more security than they can wel hope to do under any English competitor, if he come to the crowne, whoshal be continually egged on by his owne kindred, and by the aversion emulation and hatred, that he hath taken already by contention against the opposite houses, to put them downe, and to make them away, and so we have seene it by continual examples for many years¹³, though no occasion (say these men) hath ever bin offred to suspect the same so much as now, if any one of the home English blood, be preferred before the rest¹⁴."

II *Unfavourable reception in Rome; reasons for this.*

The book certainly caused some stir in Papal circles but that was purely adventitious and in no way caused by the merits or demerits of the work itself. It happened thus. Whilst the book was being printed in Antwerp in 1595, Dr. William Gifford, who shortly before had been appointed Dean of St. Peter's, Lille, together with his intimate friend Charles Paget, at the request of Mgr. Malvasia, the Nuncio, obtained for a time by bribing one of those engaged in printing it, the English original. Of this he made a summary in Latin and sent it with a letter strongly denouncing the book to the Nuncio who was at the time taking the cure at the spa near Liège. Both in the summary and in the letter accompanying it he gave a false and biased impression of the work. He represented it as being written wholly in the king of Spain's favour and against the claims of the king of Scotland, stated that the author wished to reduce England to a province of Spain and alleged that the work displeased not only the Scottish nobility but also the greater part of the English, though seeing that the book was not yet published he could not possibly have known. It was just one of those wild statements so characteristic of him.

This presentation of the contents of the book fitted in well with Malvasia's own position with regard to Spain. Apart from being at the beck of Gifford, who sided with him and acted as his chaplain and at times as his secretary, he had earlier shown his hostile attitude to Spanish interests. Complaints, indeed, about him on this score in his office of nuncio, had already been sent by Philip II's ministers in Flanders to the Spanish ambassador in Rome to be passed on to the Papal Secretary of State and to the Pope himself, which in fact resulted in his hurriedly being recalled from Flanders later in that year 1595. He now seized the occasion of acting against the Spanish party and sent the summary of the book together with Gifford's denunciatory letter to the Cardinal Secretary of State. The impression, in consequence, created in Papal circles by this biased report was very unfavourable and continued so, thanks to Malvasia, who even after his recall to Rome reported further denunciations of the work from Gifford and Paget and their partisans in Flanders¹⁵. In fact this unfavourable impression was only removed by Persons after his arrival in Rome in 1597 by the simple expedient of letting the book speak for itself, having brought with him for that purpose a Latin translation which he had been preparing just before he left Spain¹⁶.

But all this intrigue, for intrigue it undoubtedly was, had really a further purpose

behind it. On 16 October 1594, only a few months before the printing of the book, Cardinal Allen had died. Even during his life there had been an attempt by the Morgan-Paget faction to which Gifford belonged to traduce him to the king of Spain and have Owen Lewis, Bishop of Cassano, raised to the purple by the influence of Philip II, as a rival cardinal to Allen. In this the faction had met with no success; but immediately after the Cardinal's death, Cassano, who was nothing if not ambitious¹⁷, began scheming to take his place as leader of the English Catholics, though he himself was not of English nationality but of Welsh. In this he was warmly supported by his friends in Flanders such as Gifford and Paget as well as by those in Rome, the chief of whom were the bishop's nephew, Hugh Griffin, Thomas Throgmorton, who resided in the bishop's house, and Nicholas Fitzherbert, who appears to have acted as the postbox for the correspondence between the partisans in Flanders and those in Rome. It was this attempt of Cassano to occupy the place of Allen that was, in fact, the original cause of the stir in the English College.

On the other hand some friends of Persons both in Flanders and in Spain began a counter-move to have the Jesuit elevated to the purple and succeed to the position of Allen with whom he had been so closely associated. Persons himself at first disregarded this attempt though it caused him displeasure and considerable confusion, but in the end he felt himself obliged to take steps to put a stop to it, in which he was successful though not completely so.

To counter, then, this movement in favour of Persons, the partisans of Cassano made use of the Book of Succession to denigrate the Jesuit in Papal circles and elsewhere and so eliminate him as a candidate for the red hat. The letter of Gifford to Thomas Throgmorton, his friend in Rome, written but a few days after getting hold of the book, as above described, is revealing. In it is expressed his jubilation at Paget and himself obtaining the original, of which he had sent a summary to Malvasia. The Nuncio told him to write to Cassano that Persons had ruined himself, that he could never have done anything more displeasing to the Pope who would detest his "sluttish behaviour" and *that he would never rise so long as this Pope lived*. He would write further about it from the Spa where was residing the Nuncio "who would make a discourse of all Person's behaviour¹⁸."

III *Purpose of the Book.*

Though it was only in 1597, when Persons came to Rome, that the false

pression of the book created by Gifford and Paget through Malvasia, was finally rectified, those concerned with the work did not wait till then to inform the Roman Court of the purpose of the book and the need there was of it. The Jesuit, Creswell, did so as early as August 1594, months before any objection had been made to it¹⁹, and when the false impression conceived of the work became known in Spain these attempts were renewed. Thus, in 1596, Sir Francis Englefield wrote to the Pope explaining its purpose and the need of such a book, enclosing, too, his own judgment upon it and answering the objections that had been raised against it²⁰. Previous to this, Cajetan, the Nuncio in Spain had written strongly in its favour. In his despatch of 30 December 1595 he cited the letter of Gifford to Throgmorton, already quoted, and gave a brief history of the Morgan-Paget faction to which Gifford belonged. No doubt he derived much of this from Englefield, Persons, Creswell and others, but his account can be verified from other sources. The above story, he reported, had recently made complaints about a book concerning the claims to the succession of the English throne, as if it had been written to the prejudice of the King of Scotland and in favour of others and particularly of the King of Spain and the Infanta. This was a mere calumny. He himself knew the real cause which led to the composition of the work. By a law in England it had been prohibited under penalty of death to speak or write of the succession during the life of the reigning Queen, and the danger was that should Elizabeth suddenly die the heretics there would put on the throne a person of their own choice. Several times had he read the book, which considered the claims of ten or twelve pretenders to the succession, giving the reason for and against each claimant and favouring no particular pretender more than another²¹, but showing how many things must be taken into account by the Pope and other rulers as well as by the Catholics of England before supporting a new ruler. The impartiality with which all this was treated was to him really striking and quite exceptional. Nor did he see anything particularly urged against the King of Scotland with greater force than against the claims of others, except that the author supposed him to be a heretic and stressed the arguments on that score, so that Catholics should not again simply for reasons of nearness of blood accept such a one, as they had done after the death of Queen Mary. Evidently at this time Cajetan had not yet been informed that the Nuncio had been recalled from Flanders; for he suggested for the consideration of the Secretary of State that it might be well to write to Malvasia to be cautious as regards Gifford and his party since they were opposed to the interests of Spain; for certainly there were in the letter of Gifford words and phrases that might destroy the confidence of the King in that Nuncio and even, on his account, in the Holy See²².

That Cajetan was correct in assigning the reason for the book is abundantly clear from other evidence, and this, months before the book had been printed and Gifford had raised objections to it. On 30 March 1594, Aquaviva, the General of the Jesuits, wrote to Persons: "I have heard here (Rome) that a certain person who is in that province, is writing a book on the succession of 45 (England), and because in this no small inconveniences may be discerned, I desire you in any case to prevent it in some way from proceeding further. I do not think the inhabitants of 45 will take it well, I do not say all but perhaps some few. However this may be, seeing that the matter treated of is uncertain, depending on histories which cannot be fully verified, and that it is a topic that touches and can cause offence to great persons and princes, I do not hold it as suitable for publication by ours; for however one may endeavour to conceal the name of the author, your Reverence may be assured that it will be known; and should this chance to come to light many good works which are now in progress might be impeded. And so I desire you to take care to stop the writing of the book for I hold this step very necessary. P.S. If your Reverence should find that owing to the business being far advanced your efforts would have no other effect than to cause offence without attaining the desired end, it will be better not to attempt it, but if it can be done without offence then do so, and on this point I leave it to your prudence²³."

To this Persons replied: "Your Paternity's letter of the 30 March did not reach me till to-day the 4 June. In it you order me to try and stop the issue of a book you say you have been informed has been written in this province on the subject of the succession of England. Even before your Paternity wrote this, orders had been given to the agent in Belgium that the English version was to be held up and kept secret until further order, and in particular until Allen had looked into the whole matter and given his approval. Nevertheless, in deference to the duty of obedience and to comply with your Paternity's will and pleasure the same orders have been at once repeated to him. And as to the other version in Spanish, which is in the control of Don Juan de Idiaquez (I am speaking of the second part of the book, which treats of the claims peculiar to each claimant) although it is not in my power to take it away from him, still I can assure your Paternity that they will observe due secrecy and reserve in the use they make of it, and will show it to no one except the Pope and the Spanish Ambassador in Rome. This they have told me, and that is all that can be done about it for the time being.

"If I had thought, or it had occurred to me that I had any cause to think, that

our Paternity would call a halt in the matter, I should have taken measures before to hold it up, though the matter does not depend entirely upon me but upon three or four others who had also taken part in it and given advice: and they are men of the highest position and experience who have the best means of knowing and judging in matters of this kind concerning the nation. These were of the opinion that not only is no ill consequence to be feared from this treatise, but that much advantage can be expected from it for the Catholics and great help to the cause; and they say that it is one of the most important and necessary things that has yet been done on its behalf. Such is their opinion; and possibly your Paternity's judgement will not be very different when you read the Spanish translation which will be sent to you by the galleys now departing. I did not send the English version because it would not be understood: nor is there anyone there in Rome from whom our Paternity could get information who has more knowledge of the business than those who are here, especially Sir Francis Englefield and another gentleman from Ireland, who is very wise in such matters. And so I send your Paternity only the chapter headings. And now in order that you may be better satisfied in the interval before you see the book which we are sending, I shall jot down some points that are likely to have that effect.

"In the first place both books are treatises by learned men which have been written with all courtesy and impartiality and without prejudice to anyone. The first book deals with this point only, that in the succession to a kingdom closeness of blood relationship is not the only thing to be taken into consideration, but other circumstances also, especially religion and the worship of God. And it is shown that this practice was also observed by heathen races.

"It is considered very necessary to make this point in order to prevent Catholics from running blindly after any person who may happen to have a claim to the succession by blood,—without any other consideration. This was what happened after the death of Queen Mary and afterwards in France: they thought they were bound to it in conscience.

"The second book sets forth the claim of five royal houses and of ten or eleven individuals who all have *prima facie* claims; and it is done without preferring one claimant to another, and sets out the arguments adduced by each one in his own behalf, and against the others. This is done without speaking ill of anyone or of his claims and without determining the right of any one of them.

"This point also needed to be aired to counteract the law made by the heretics, forbidding mention of this subject. By means of that law they wanted to keep everyone in darkness in this matter, so as to saddle them later with the king they themselves wanted. But when light has thus been thrown on the subject, many people will have their eyes opened, and even the heretics will be divided in opinion among themselves, and the Catholics will see that there are other cloths from which to cut their coat which can be used without scruple of conscience, if the claimants are heretics. With regard to the King of Scotland nothing is said against him except on the score of his being a heretic and not indeed that; for what is said applies equally to a Catholic as to a heretic: nor does it stop at that; the arguments that apply to each of the contestants for and against are stated objectively. This is true in the case of the King of Scots equally with that of the Spanish princes and others. And I think that it will undoubtedly tend to the service of God and the advantage of England, and will give just cause for offence to nobody. Yet if your Paternity comes to a different conclusion, I will do very willingly all in my power to have the book suppressed, or anything else that you wish²⁴."

A similar explanation of the reason for and purpose of the book can be seen in Creswell's letter to the Pope and to a Cardinal, — and this again months before Gifford had seen the book and knew its contents or had raised objections to it²⁵. Later, in narrating how the book itself, once it became available in a Latin translation, had changed the adverse opinion of it in the Papal curia, Persons himself sums up the reasons for such a work as he had explained them to the Pope and the Cardinals. "The arguments," he wrote, "for the usefulness and need of the book were clear, being firstly in order to counteract the law which the English heretics had passed, making it high treason for any one to write a word on the subject; this with the intention that, when the time came, they might impose on the Catholics the individual they themselves wanted, since no one had any knowledge what rights were involved.

"Secondly this book was required in order to resolve the doubts which the Catholics had conceived or were liable to conceive from the false doctrine in the treatises of a certain Frenchman, Belloy by name, who, writing in our time, has declared that in admitting the claim of a king or prince it is not necessary to consider anything else but nearness of blood relationship, and that neither religion nor virtue nor any other circumstance should be taken into consideration for this purpose.

"Thirdly, because it was fitting that the English Catholics should be to some extent forewarned about the issue, before they were forced to take a decision; and is they will in all probability have to do soon and not without the accompaniment of wars and revolts, since there are so many and diverse claimants and the Queen is old.

"Fourthly, in order that the other Christian princes also, and especially the Pope, may jointly examine the bearings of this affair and have time to think it over and consider the claims, potentialities, advantages and disadvantages of each of the claimants and decide who will best serve the interests not only of England but also of the whole of Christendom.

"These arguments accord with the view of nearly all the most influential people of the English nation who are in exile and saw the book before it was printed: they were endorsed afterwards by the other Catholics in England, who have written about it and they were corroborated by the actual success of the book itself; for it has not caused any persecution in England but a lull rather up to now and many people have been brought back to concord and moderation and their eyes have been opened by reading this book; so we are told from there. And so these arguments have produced a great change here, too, in Rome, and have done away with or considerably lessened suspicions and the impression that had been created and had taken root, owing to the perpetual complaints and lying reports which some Englishmen in Flanders, adherents of the King of Scotland, had sent to the curia here in order to make the book odious.

"It is understood that the chief instrument in creating this impression in the curia here has been Mgr. Malvasia, who was Nuncio for a time in Flanders and received reports from Paget, Liggon, Tresham and other Englishmen of that station through a certain Dr. Gifford who had recently been made Dean of Lille, a man highly prejudiced in these matters, who was living at that time in Mgr. Malvasia's house. The Monsignor came to Rome primed with the reports which had come from Flanders, and making use of those which they proceeded to send him afterwards, he has continued the same line of action, and as he found the atmosphere favourable for what was then being attempted on behalf of France, it is not to be wondered at if reports of this kind found acceptance²⁶."

IV *Attitude of Queen Elizabeth and her Ministers to the Succession.*

Whether the statute to which Persons and others referred, called the Statute of Silence because it forbade under penalty of death any speech or writing on the subject of the succession²⁷, was due to the machinations of the English politicians or of Elizabeth herself may possibly be a debatable question. Certain it is that quite early in the reign they endeavoured to exclude the Queen of Scots, both in 1560, by the Treaty of Edinburgh, and in October, two years later, when Queen Elizabeth was thought to be dying of small pox²⁸; and later still they were so determined on this exclusion that in 1572 and again in 1574 they negotiated to hand Mary over to her enemies in Scotland on condition that she should be assassinated²⁹. Indeed, it is open to question whether the Statute of Silence was not itself directed against the Queen of Scots on account of the Catholic revival at that time, a step, in short, towards her final removal, so long desired by the leading English politicians and engineered but a few years later.

As for Elizabeth herself, she made her position as regards the succession quite clear early in her reign. In 1561 Lethington was sent by Mary to the English court to discuss the ratification of the Treaty of Edinburgh and to have her right to the succession safeguarded. He has left a revealing record of interviews he had with Queen Elizabeth on the subject. "Think you", she said, "that I could losse my winding sheet. Princes cannot like their children, those that should succeed unto them, being witness King Charles the seventh of France, how liked he his son Louis the eleventh; Louis the eleventh Charles the eighth, the king Francis his son Henry. How then should I, think you, like my cousin being declared my heir apparent as Charles liked Louis the eleventh when he was Duke of Orleans...

"But the third consideration is most weighty of all. I know the inconstancy of the people of England, how they ever mislike the government and have their eyes fixed upon that person that is next to succeed, and naturally men be so disposed: plures adorant solem orientem quam occidentem. I have good experience of it myself in my sister's time how desirous men were that I should be in place and earnest to set me up. And if I would have consented I know what enterprise would have been attempted to bring it to pass and now perhaps affections of some are altered. As children dream in their sleep after apples and in the morning when they awake and find not the apples they weep, so every man that bare me good will when I was Lady Elizabeth to whom I showed a good visage, imagineth himself that immediately after my coming to the crown every man should be rewarded according to his own fantasy

and now finding the event answer not their expectation it may be that some could be content of new change in hope to be then in better case.

"No princes' revenue be so great that they are able to satisfy the insatiable avidity of men. And if we either for not giving to men at their discretion or yet for any other cause, should miscontent any our subjects, it is to be feared that if they knew a certain successor of our crown they would have recourse thither, and what danger it were, she being a puissant princess and so near a neighbour ye may judge. So that in assuring her of the succession we might put our present state in doubt³⁰."

As the quotation shows it was purely a matter of statecraft on the part of Elizabeth, her one aim being to make herself secure during her tenure of the throne without any regard to the future good of the country. Her attitude, in fact, was that "after me the deluge". But were her ministers in any better case, anxious as they were above all things to retain power, no matter by what means, even by the assassination of Mary, Queen of Scots? The Statute of Silence was, indeed, as Allen remarked, a most iniquitous one, and he would often affirm that no law in the world could be more unjust or more contrary to all reason or conscience³¹. It is very easy to read history backwards and to consider, however unconsciously, that James' peaceful accession to the throne was always certain, because he did in the event so succeed Elizabeth. But to do so is to run counter to the fact that his accession was by no means assured in the nineties, as James himself well knew, and that even as late as 1600-1601 the Cecilian party in England was negotiating with Spain through that same Persons, so berated by moderns for supporting the aims of Spain, to recognise the Infanta, Philip's daughter, as the successor of the Queen³². Leaving the succession an open question and forbidding any discussion of the subject by word or writing might well have led to civil war. It was, in fact, only the able and subtle negotiations of Sir Robert Cecil with King James VI during the last two years of Queen Elizabeth's reign, carefully conducted in secrecy without her knowledge and in defiance of that very Statute of Silence, that eventually led to the peaceful accession of James, — and this, again, all in the interests of Cecil himself; for he virtually became king, as James himself recognised³³.

At all events, the primary aim of the Book of Succession was to obviate this unjust Statute of Silence and prevent, if possible, the harmful effect it might have

on the Catholic cause; and this aim was declared months before Gifford had any knowledge of the work: it was not just an after-thought to counter the objections raised against the book. Historians not acquainted with some of the pertinent documents of the case nor cognisant of the purpose behind Gifford's attack on the book, have far too easily accepted his view of it, that it was written to promote the cause of the Infanta and against the claims of James³⁴.

*V No Question of King of Spain becoming King of England
or of England being Subject to Spain.*

Gifford's other charge, that Persons and his friends were ready to hand over England to Philip II and reduce it to a province of Spain, was no less wide of the mark. The ruling idea of Persons and his friends was to secure a Catholic successor to Queen Elizabeth. "My conclusion shall be to your whole letter," Persons wrote to Anthony Standen, "that among such variety and perplexity of pretenders as now are for that crown, it is enough for a Catholic sober man to have any prince admitted by the body of the realm and allowed by the authority of God's Catholic Church that will defend the religion of his old noble ancestors; and without this nothing is sufficient nor should any reason in the world move me to yield him favour or obedience though he were our father, son or brother³⁵." Again, he wrote to William Crichton, the Scotch Jesuit: "I confess I desire the possession of the kingdom to fall to a man of known faith and constancy; heretics or doubtful Catholics I abhor with all the strength of my manhood. We have already suffered enough misfortune from the mistake which the English Catholics made at the death of Queen Mary when they chose this present Queen Elizabeth for the sole reason she was an English woman (though her faith was doubtful) and rejected Mary the Queen of France, a Catholic, because Scotland was her native land. And yet after a time they were anxious to have the Scottish Queen, even at the risk of their heads, in place of the English one. Therefore, that we may not make the same mistake a second time and that, as the Gospel says, our last state may not be worse than the first, it is my opinion that in this great cause we should put no trust in any blandishments, or in anyone of doubtful expectation, but look first of all to what is the main thing and of supreme importance: let him be a true Catholic prince, let him be of proved faith, and it matters little from what part of the world he comes, if only he has strength both to seize and also to protect and maintain the kingdom, and if the voice of the Supreme pontiff whose interest it is above all others, approve the choice; for in a matter that is open to doubt the chief rule of conduct for us ought to be to follow his judgement as to what is best for us and

or Christendom for the greater glory of God; and to do so, I think that book of which we have been speaking will afford no little light³⁵."

It is true that, all things taken into account, he came to consider the Infanta as the best choice, especially if married to a Catholic prince, but, as his letter to the English Jesuit, W. Holt, shows, he was by no means tied to that solution of the succession. "Finally", he wrote, "his holiness must be brought to see that the only way to adjust matters will be for him to come to some satisfactory arrangement with his Catholic Majesty and fix on some suitable person who would be persona grata to his Catholic Majesty and to the Catholics of England and Scotland and to the King of France and the king of Denmark and to everybody else:" but who that person is to be Fr. Persons proposes to leave for a time to the very serious consideration of his Holiness; "though in my opinion no arrangement would be so profitable or likely or so feasible as to fix on the person of the Infanta, marrying her to the Cardinal Prince. Nevertheless if you and our other good friends there should be of different opinion and have thought of some other plan and the means to carry it out, I beg you to write to me about it because I shall be pleased to fall into line with the rest. I intend to go very slowly in this matter and wait to see what you have to say."³⁷ It was in fact a statesmanlike policy involving some composition between Spain and France and England, the Infanta, for instance, giving up her claim to Brittany and England all claims to France.

And as for the conquest of England by Philip II for himself, Persons and his friends always dissuaded the King and his ministers from any such plan. Writing propos of the negotiations with the Cecilian party in England, to Sesa, the Spanish Ambassador in Rome, to say that it was not enough for the Spanish king to declare that the successor should be a Catholic, he gives as his seventh reason for this the following:- "Should the decision of his Majesty be made known in such general terms to those who have proposed particular persons³⁸ it will seem to them an artifice on our part and will breed that same suspicion that some turbulent and mischievous persons gave forth against Cardinal Allen during his life-time and against me in particular, namely that he wished to subject the country to the yoke of Spain. This, in the present circumstances they will urge all the more since they will think his Majesty desires the kingdom for himself. And though to some good and prudent men this would not be distasteful, knowing in very truth that this would be the safest way of all, yet the difficulties of bringing it about, arising both from within the realm and from foreign princes would be very considerable, as

your Excellency and I have many times discussed. This, too, was the opinion of the late king of pious memory who considered it better for him to place a friend or a dependent on the throne than to claim it for himself; though this too, I leave to the judgement of his Majesty³⁹."

Thomas Fitzherbert, again the friend of Persons, who was in close contact with him in Spain wrote in his *Defence of the Catholyke Cause*: "Therefore I here protes upon my conscience, not only in my own behalf, but also in the behalf of Fr. Persons and the English Catholics, that serve his Catholic Majesty, that our dealings have been so contrary to that which is imputed unto us, that we have done far better offices for our country in this point (of conquest) than the malice of our adversarie suffereth them to suppose. For having well considered that the breach betwixt her Majesty and the Catholic King, growing daily by sundry acts of hostility on both parts, to an implacable quarrel, might move him to seek the conquest of our country (whereof his puissant preparations in the year 88 gave no small suspicion to the world) and not having any hope to be able to dissuade his Majesty from seeking some sharp revenge of the attempts made against him by sea and land (whereto not only reason of state, but also respect of his reputation and honour seemed to oblige him) we determined to do our uttermost endeavour so to temper and qualify the same, as it might not turn to any conquest of our country. To which, Sir Francis Englefield, whilst he lived, Fr. Persons and Fr. Creswell and myself have at divers times represented to his Majesty of glorious memory, many important reasons to persuade him, that it was not convenient for him to seek the conquest of England nor probable that he could conquer it or yet if he were able to do it, that he could not keep it in subjection; and this we have urged so oft and with such pregnant reasons, as well to his Majesty that now is, as to his father of glorious memory, that I verily believe, that if they ever had any inclination or resolution to seek the coquest of England, we have done sufficient diligence to divert them from all cogitation thereof⁴⁰." Even before this in December 1595, The Nuncio in Spain had assured the Secretary of State that he himself and the English Catholics were satisfied that the king of Spain did not intend to hold the kingdom for himself or to unite it to the crown of Spain⁴¹.

On this point again, historians have all too easily accepted the statements of the party—a small one in fact—opposed to Persons and his friends, not realising the underlying purpose for which those statements were made, nor being acquainted with the contemporary documents that disprove them. Somewhat inconsistently they

have pointed the finger of scorn at Persons for wanting to bring in a Catholic successor to Queen Elizabeth even though that successor were to be a foreigner, (though, as has been shown, without subjection to a foreign country; restoring, in fact, the Burgundian alliance of old), and yet these same historians have nothing but praise for Sir Robert Cecil who actually did bring in a foreign king, James VI of Scotland, — a king, moreover, of a country frequently hostile to England, as past history had shown, and traditionally allied with France, England's traditional enemy. In any case there is no doubt that Persons was actuated by no motive of self-interest; but the same cannot be said of Sir Robert Cecil. Furthermore, these historians justify the Revolution of 1688, which did in fact, bring in a foreign king with foreign forces, to overthrow the legitimate sovereign, James II, because it was in the interests of the Protestant religion, yet condemn Persons for wanting a Catholic successor to Queen Elizabeth, even though a foreigner, to restore the religion that the monarchs of England had professed for a thousand years and which had been relinquished by but two Protestant sovereigns, and one of them a short-lived minor.

Finally, whilst the Book of Succession was still only in manuscript, Creswell referring to it in a letter to the Pope, wrote:— "And there is no doubt that the greater part will agree to accept the person whom your Holiness will nominate without regard to whether he is an Englishman or not provided he be an assured and zealous Catholic and a king also peculiar to that kingdom without himself being subject to any foreign nation. This we have already declared to the Catholic king; and his Majesty has fully agreed out of his holy zeal for the Catholic religion and the special affection he has for that country"⁴²."

VI Effects of the Book in Rome, Scotland and England.

The unfavourable impression produced by the *Book of Succession* in Papal circles has already been stated, as well as the underlying cause of this — the false and biassed accounts of it derived from Gifford, Paget and their friends in Flanders and spread abroad in the Papal curia by Mgr. Malvasia both when he was nuncio in Flanders and later when recalled to Rome. Once, however, it could be read in a language known to those of the court of Rome, the book spoke for itself and did away with this unfavourable impression. It was for this purpose that Persons took with him to Rome a Latin translation of the work which he had been preparing just before his departure from Spain⁴³. Reporting to Juan de Idiaquez a few weeks after his arrival in Rome, he wrote: "A very unfavourable impression has been produced in

all the dignitaries of the curia here in regard to the Book of Succession, as though it had been written solely to support the claim of his Majesty of Spain, and especially to oppose that of the king of Scotland; but this impression was quickly removed when the book itself was produced and the reasons for which it had been written were made clear⁴⁴." A few years later, when the Appellant priests were in Rome in 1602, they endeavoured to use the book as a weapon against Persons and received the reply from Cardinal Aldobrandino, the Secretary of State, that he had seen the book and could find nothing evil in it⁴⁵.

In Scotland the book does not appear to have been widely diffused; for it was written primarily to instruct the Catholics of England. It undoubtedly irritated James VI, but any book that insisted on the Catholic religion, rather than nearness of blood, being the paramount consideration in the choice of a successor to the English throne would have done that. The very fact that it discussed the pretensions of other claimants besides what he regarded as his own exclusive right to the throne would have had the same effect, and the reference to the Law of Association and its consequences resulting from the execution of his mother, would certainly have increased his ire. The book was also strongly objected to by some Catholics of Scotland, who were influenced by their natural affection for their country and their king, such as the Earl of Angus and the Jesuit, William Crichton⁴⁶. But there is no evidence that the work led to greater animosity towards Catholics on the part of James, nor of any increase in their persecution. The hopes of a Catholic revival in Scotland had already been destroyed by the exile of the Catholic earls in March 1595 before the publication of the book, but James was not yet in a position to dispense with the Catholics in his struggle against the Calvinist ministers, and in fact, continued his policy of playing off the one against the other. So far, indeed, from greater persecution resulting from the publication of the book, it was rather the reverse; for it was at that time that James endeavoured to cultivate the friendship of the Catholic powers and seek their aid, as well as to encourage the growth of a party amongst the English Catholic exiles, — all with a view to his future accession, a policy which would have been rendered nugatory by any increase in persecution⁴⁷. The enigmatic mission of Pury Ogilvy in 1595 for this purpose may very possibly have been commissioned by James, as Ogilvy avowed. The king's denial of any such commission does not preclude his having done so, for he was quite ready to disavow his agents when it suited him, as it undoubtedly did when he made this denial: and his anger against the baron may well have been caused by the knavery of Ogilvy, who **was** really an agent of the English Government

and received some pecuniary reward for his work from Sir Robert Cecil, to whom also he appealed for help when reduced to straits by James' action against him⁴⁸. At all events when Crichton raised as an objection the harm the book had done, Persons had the telling reply from the very admissions of the Scotch Jesuit. "About Scotland," he wrote, "I can add nothing to the statement which your Reverence makes in your letter, that two fathers of the Society have been set free by the king⁴⁹ and others treated kindly. The facts speak for themselves; for before the book was published, the King of Scots had the Lord Fentry beheaded on account of his Catholic faith, but no one, so far as I know, after the book was published⁵⁰."

The facts, indeed, did speak for themselves, so much so that by the end of 1598 Sir Robert Cecil became highly suspicious of the conduct of James and alarmed for his orthodoxy and that of James' wife, who, some months later, was in fact reconciled to the Catholic Church. "Want of money might, as Cecil contended," wrote Tytler, "explain somewhat of James' late coldness; but there must be deeper agencies and convictions producing the strange appearances now exhibited in a country which had, within these few years, stood in the van of Protestant kingdoms, which had been the stronghold of Presbyterian purity. It was noted, too, by Cecil, that Elphinstone, James' principal Secretary of State, was a Catholic; that Seton, the President of the Session, was a Catholic; that Lord Livingstone, the governor of the young princesses, was a Catholic; and that Huntley, who notwithstanding his recent recantation, was strongly suspected of a secret attachment to his ancient faith, possessed the highest influence over the king. Then, James' late embassies to Catholic princes; the favour shown to Gordon, the Jesuit; his secret encouragement of Tyrone, the great enemy of England; a late mission of Colonel Semple to Spain; his animosity to the ministers of the Kirk; his introduction of bishops; his correspondence with the Duchess of Feria, and other Catholics; and even his speeches in the open convention of his three Estates, were all quoted, and not without good reason as strong proofs of his defection⁵¹."

All these facts, enumerated in the citation, are a very far cry from the supposed increase of persecution of Catholics caused by the Book of Succession; rather might it be urged that that very book had shown James the need of cultivating the Catholic princes and the Catholics both of Scotland and England in order to secure his succession to the English throne⁵². This in fact, was but policy on James' part in the then uncertainty of his succession; for Nicholson, the English agent in Scotland, reporting to Sir Robert Cecil as late as January 1600 the views of one

of the Councillors of the king, wrote: "This party said to me that they saw no hope that the king should be favoured in England and that therefore, they, meaning many of the councillors (as I judge) did wish the king had no claim at all; for that they see us not like to receive or favour him, and himself too weak for so great a cause; but this to your honour's secrecy⁵³." The Book of Succession, in fact, was published at a time when the relations between James and England had been very strained and they continued so right down to 1601. It would have been sheer folly on James' part to persecute the Catholics on account of the book in such circumstances, and the facts clearly show that he did no such thing.

In England the ministers of the Queen had notice of the book before it was published⁵⁴. After its publication there was a report that it had been prohibited under heavy penalties⁵⁵. The report was doubtless correct, but later writers have erroneously amplified it, as though a special law was passed against the book. Research, however, has failed to reveal any such law. Parliament, indeed, was not in session when the book came out in 1595 and did not meet again till two years later. The statutes contain no such particular law. Nor has research revealed any particular proclamation in lieu of such a law concerning the book. There was, in fact, no need for any special law, nor for any particular proclamation; for the book came under the ban of the Statute of Silence, and as a Catholic work, its possession, and still more its distribution, was prohibited under heavy penalties by many previous proclamations⁵⁶. Nor do there appear to be extant any administrative orders as regards the book such as were issued in the case of *Leicester's Commonwealth*, nor is there record of anyone being punished for having the book as there is of Catholics in connection with other Catholic works⁵⁷. Rowland Whyte, it is true, in November 1595 reported to Sir Robert Sydney, Governor of Flushing, that it was thought to be treason to have a copy of the book; yet only a few weeks earlier Robert Beale, Clerk of the Council, begged the same Sir Robert to procure him a copy. "I hear" he wrote, "that of late a very vile book has been printed in English in Antwerp, touching the succession of this crown, defaming her Majesty and disabling all the titles of such that hereafter may pretend any interest thereunto and deriving a strange pretense from John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, upon the king of Spain which he minds shortly to challenge: I trust the Lord will never suffer him to prevail in so wicked and unjust a cause. If you could procure me any one of the said book, I should think myself much beholden unto you, for I would gladly see, upon what ground he establishes so unlawful a surmise. I hear also that it is dedicated to the Earl of Essex, of an interest surely to bring him into jealousy

and disgrace here⁵⁸. There is a good deal of inaccuracy in this statement derived not from knowledge of the book but from hearsay, but he was right in the last particular about the dedication to the Earl of Essex; though whether it was so dedicated to bring him into disgrace may be doubted, however it may have been used for that effect.

Certainly, some weeks later the book did cause some strain in the Earl's relations with the Queen, who showed him a copy, "there being dangerous praises in it of his value and worthiness: and at his coming from court on Monday november 3, he was observed to look wan and pale, being exceedingly troubled at this great piece of villainy done unto him⁵⁹." The Queen's displeasure, however, was very short-lived, for only a week later Rowland Whyte reported to Sir Robert Sydney: 'My Lord of Essex has put off the melancholy he fell into by a printed book, delivered to the Queen, wherein the harm that was meant him, by her Majesty's gracious favour and wisdom is turned to good and strengthens her love for him⁶⁰.'" In the very strained relations then obtaining between Essex and the Cecils it may very well be Burghley or his son Sir Robert Cecil who saw to it that the Queen was handed a copy of the book for the very purpose of causing a rift in the Earl's relations with the Queen, just as years earlier the elder Cecil was reported to have handed her a copy of *Leicester's Commonwealth* to damage Leicester.

It may be too, that the publication of the book influenced the Earl of Hertford in the interests of his children to make an attempt to prove his secret marriage with Lady Catherine Grey which earlier in the reign by a commission of the Queen had been declared null. He certainly incurred the Queen's displeasure by the attempt and was in consequence sent to the Tower early in November but was released by an order of the Queen of January 3 of the following year and committed to the custody of the Archbishop of Canterbury⁶¹.

There may also be a connection between the appearance of the book and the questions put to Nicholas Williamson on the matter of the succession. He had been captured with the Scottish priest, David Lawe in the preceding March on the borders of Scotland and was said to have been sent to James with a secret message from the Jesuit, William Crichton, urging the king to become a Catholic and secure the succession thereby to the English throne⁶².

Be this as it may, it seems clear that at this time, whether due to the publication

of the book or not, the question of the succession was very much in the minds of the Queen's ministers and others⁶³. But whatever excitement the book may have caused soon died down on a closer study of it and certainly did not lead to an increase in the persecution of Catholics but rather the reverse. Nor from Burghley's or the Queen's point of view was there any reason why it should, as the book settled on the claim of no particular candidate and cautiously stated that the matter could not be determined "during the life of the Queen without evident danger of her person, for the reasons that all men do know importing such perils as are wont to follow like cases of declaring heirs apparent⁶⁴." Moreover the relations between England and Scotland and between James and the Cecils were becoming more and more strained at the time of the appearance of the book: and the presentation of the claims of several candidates besides that of James could not in the circumstances be altogether unwelcome to the Queen or Lord Burghley. There was a further reason for the latter not being too offended by the book, as it stated that among English candidates it was highly probable that the succession would fall to one of the children of the Countess of Derby; and it was into that family that Burghley had married his grand-daughter.

These conclusions are supported by that very report that announced the book to be prohibited under heavy penalties; for it continues; "But when the matter was more closely considered they did not find it so dreadful as they thought. Rather have people begun to say that it is written with a sense of responsibility and with moderation: and so much is this the case that some highly-placed persons do not hesitate to say that the book contains no criminal matter, and this they assert so that it can be read more publicly. They affirm this, indeed, all the more, because it contains certain arguments in favour of the pretensions of the Earl of Derby who is son-in-law of the Treasurer⁶⁵. Hence the book is carried about all the more willingly for it is thought that the Treasurer thinks highly of it⁶⁶." When Crichton objected that the book had done much harm, Persons replied: "I on the other hand gathered these conclusions as to its utility and I could also produce witnesses of the highest credit from England who vouch for it that beyond other books so far written this has helped exceedingly⁶⁷ and this time will teach more fully. As to the harm it has done, I know not what instance you can give; for as to what you say about an increase of persecution we clearly see the opposite of the case in England; for there, after the publication of the book the Catholics were treated more mildly⁶⁸."

This too, is confirmed by Verstegan who from Antwerp forwarded the reports

from England to Persons in Spain and to Roger Baines in Rome⁶⁹; and when Sir Francis Englefield, in giving his judgement of the book, stated the objection raised against it that it would cause great persecution of the Catholics, he answered that this was refuted by the fact that from the time the book came into the hands of the heretics, no such persecution followed; for when it was examined by the supreme judges in England, they found no cause in it for which they could lawfully show severity to Catholics since nothing was decided in the book in favour of any particular claimant. No period in fact, for many years had been so tranquil for Catholics as the time since its publication⁷⁰. Finally when two years or so later the two priests, William Bishop and Robert Charnock complained in Rome about the book on the score that it offended adversaries, they were confronted with the same fact mentioned by Englefield. Martin Array, relating the incident wrote from Rome: "I had almost omitted one particular which shall not be evil for you to know, and that is that among points of commission delivered in writing to those two ambassadors, one principal was noted in all their letters that no books should be admitted that offended the present state of England in matters of state, or exasperated the adversaries. Whereupon they being examined what books or book they meant in particular, said it was the book of succession. And being demanded further, whether any particular persecution had been moved hitherto by that book or any man put to death for having it in the 3 or 4 years since it was written, they said they knew of none. Then was it asked them, why there was more grudging then and complaint against this book that had moved no persecution than against Dr Sanders *De Monarchia* and book *de Schismate*, and Dr Bristowe motives (for which diverse in particular have been put to death) as also against D. Allen late Cardinal his book *contra justitiam Britannicam*, D. Stapletons *Didimus*, Mr Reynoldes against Whitacre; and such others, who are more earnest against the present state than this other book of succession which speaketh so mildly and indifferently, as he can justly offend no part. And now our spiritual masters, being not able to answer, discovered themselves and their fellows, under pretence of spirit and religion to be Scotist in faction, without respect of religion at all, their but being to set up a known heretic, and thereby also to meddle more in matters of state and to offend more the present state than by any other way that is known⁷¹. So as in this they have neither reason, religion, nor state with them, but only emulation folly and faction. And so I understand that the elder of these two hath under his oath since that time recalled his proposition of himself, saying that he alloweth not thereof, but rather thinketh that the said book of succession hath done more good than hurt in England. And so you can see how these matters go⁷²."

One effect the book certainly had. It opened the eyes of English Catholics. Before it was published they were inclined to give their support to the claims of James as of right, but after its appearance it led them to favour those of the Infanta⁷³.

VII Authorship of the Book: Persons not the sole author.

There remains to be considered the final question of the authorship of the book. In considering this point two things must be kept in mind. The first is that the book was first written in English. The manuscript for the edition printed at Antwerp, which Gifford for a time obtained, was written in that language; and Englefield referred to it as the original. Creswell also mentioned that the work was composed in English and that at the request of Philip II the second part of it was translated into Spanish; and Persons in a letter to Juan de Idiaquez stated that he was preparing a Latin translation of the book⁷⁴. The second thing to be kept in mind is that Persons never took up an apologetic attitude as regards the work; always did he consider it a good book, necessary and opportune. Had he alone composed it, he would not have hesitated to acknowledge it, even as he defended it in Rome and elsewhere, but he never did acknowledge that he was the sole author of it. The available evidence, in fact, makes it clear that he was not the sole author, but that he had some part in the production of the book. What that part was it is impossible to assess, but it would certainly seem not to have been so large as even those judge who are agreed that he was not alone responsible for it. Gifford, it is true, asserted that Persons composed the work, but this assertion, if it be understood as declaring the Jesuit to be the sole author, is negatived by his own report in that same letter to Malvasia, viz. that the original English was in the hand of Verstegan, with marginal and interlinear notes together with additional pages in the hand of Persons, and that Englefield, William Stanley, Hugh Owen and others had helped as well in its composition as in its printing. This, too, is supported by the first mention of the book by Persons himself. When Aquaviva requested him to prevent its publication, he replied that before the receipt of his letter an order had been given to hold up the work in English, and that the order would be repeated, though the matter did not altogether depend upon him. In explanation of the book and in defence of it, possibly answering Aquaviva's objection that the matter, depending as it did on histories, could not be fully verified, Persons stated that the two treatises or parts of the book had been written by learned men. Such a statement, indeed, suggests that his own part in the book was relatively not a large one: it would be quite out of character with him, and with his very frank relations with Aquaviva, so to refer to the book, had it been written by himself alone or even had

he had a large part in its composition: he would never have hidden himself under the appellation of a learned man⁷⁶. Aquaviva himself evidently so interpreted his statement; for in a reply to a letter of Crichton about the book for which Crichton made his fellow Jesuit responsible, he answered that he did not believe that Persons wrote the English original⁷⁷.

A further fact suggesting that Persons was not the sole author of the work is the curious way the impersonal construction was used ("si ha scritto un libro della successione") and the indeterminate phrase "the author", by those who knew the history of the book, even before it was published and before any objection had been made to it, and in circumstances where there was no reason to conceal the author's name, as in the private notes of Mgr. Pena, Persons' intimate friend in Rome⁷⁸.

Finally, there are the statements of Persons himself. In his letter to the Earl of Angus, 24 January 1600, he wrote: "For the second touching the book of succession, as I can not set down to your Lordship at this time who was the author thereof (if any one were) so can I assure you upon mine own knowledge that before it was published it passed through the hands and view of the wisest and gravest English Catholics living then in banishment and men as tenderly affected to his Majesty of Scotland and as dear to his mother as any of that nation whatsoever, as their works did well declare, whereof two are now dead and therefore I may name them, our late Cardinal in Rome and Sir Francis Englefield in Spain: others are yet alive and it is perhaps not convenient to name them." And he proceeds to defend the book explaining its purpose⁷⁹. Again in a letter to Garnet 24 May 1603 he wrote: "The second point is about some late proceedings and the book of succession by name. Whereunto I answer most sincerely that as it appeareth by our late Cardinal's handwriting that he together with Sir Francis Englefield and some others were the chief authors of that book, so that whatever consent I or other Catholics of our nation had therein it was for no aversion of minds or good will from his Majesty but only that by laying forth other competitors besides himself he might be drawn the sooner to be a Catholic, the only want whereof was ever our affliction, and that is surely the truth and nothing else⁸⁰."

There is other evidence to connect Sir Francis Englefield with the book. As early as 1575 there is a report to Burghley of his being interested in the matter of the right to the throne⁸¹. After the death of Mary, Queen Scots, the matter was

discussed by the Catholic exiles as can be seen by the papers of Allen and Persons⁸² and in Simancas there is yet extant a paper on the succession, written earlier by Sir Francis Englefield, with a relation of the claimants to the throne⁸³. There is also a letter of Englefield to William Heighington, after the death of the latter's father, asking him to send back his own books, papers, genealogies and the like that he had lent him⁸⁴: and in the examination of Thomas Wright, who had been with Persons in Spain but had been dismissed from the Society just before his return to England in 1595, the ex-Jesuit stated that "as for Sir Francis Englefield's disposal of his time, he says that having one foot in the grave he must prepare for eternity, but two years since he set out a book on the pretenders of the crown and who are likely to prevail"⁸⁵. Moreover, the dedicatory epistle to the Earl of Essex, with its reference to acquaintance and friendship with the Earl's father and grandfather could hardly have been written by Persons, but bears all probability of having been composed by Sir Francis Englefield who, as a Councillor of State, would certainly have known these forbears of Essex, when he was in England in former years.

As to Allen's participation, it is known from his secretary, Roger Baines, that Allen himself was about to write a book on the subject but that when he heard one was being written, he sent all his papers to Persons and that he saw and revised the manuscript of the book after it had been composed⁸⁶: and Englefield states definitely that before the work was published he and Allen had read it carefully⁸⁷. From the evidence then, it appears that the book was the product of many persons consulting and working together and certainly not of Persons alone⁸⁸.

NOTES

1. *A Conference about the next Succession to the Crowne of England . . . Published by R. Doleman*. Imprinted at N (Antwerp, Arnout Coninx) 1594. 8° (Allison & Rogers 271.)
- 1a. Persons to Juan de Idiaquez, Rome, 22 May 1597, Westminster Cathedral Archives. VI. n.36.
2. Thus, in his *England of Elizabeth*, London, 1950, p.462, A.L. Rouse writes: "In 1591 he (F. Persons) published his book of the English Succession in which he argued Philip's claims as a descendant of the house of Lancaster, on behalf of his daughter, the Infanta: any clever fool, it seems, can find arguments for anything he wants. Like everything he

said or did—for he had a fatal touch where his countrymen were concerned—the book created fury in England and did enormous harm to Catholics.” Mr. Rouse would have difficulty in proving these statements from contemporary evidence, the method followed by the authentic historian. Nearly everyone of his statements is, in fact, erroneous. The book was not published in 1591, as a simple glance at it would have shown him. The dedicatory letter to the Earl of Essex, given in the first pages of the book, is dated “the last of December 1593” and the date printed on the title-page is 1594, though as a matter of fact the book was not published till the following year. Persons, moreover, was not the sole author of the work, nor was it written to urge the claims of Philip II on behalf of his daughter, the Infanta. There is plenty of evidence extant as to its purpose from those who were concerned in its production. Nor, though it offended against the Statute of Silence, did it create the fury in England that Mr. Rouse imagines: the concern in English Government circles over this book was nothing like that caused by Allen’s *True, Sincere and Modest Defence*, or by *Leicester’s Commonwealth*, or even by the defence of Campion put out soon after his martyrdom. That it did enormous harm to Catholics is again pure imagination on Mr. Rouse’s part, or should we say ‘wishful thinking’?

His *Apologie Catholique* was published in 1585 and his *De l’Autorité du Roi* in 1587. Cf. J. W. Allen, *A History of Political Thought in the Sixteenth Century*, London, 1928, pp. 383-386.

It is futile for historians of the Whig tradition to exclaim against the doctrine of the Book of Succession and at the same time to defend the Revolution of 1688 and the Act of Settlement, both of which changed the rightful succession by nearness of blood and that in the interests of the Protestant religion, in which of course was included the estates of the politicians concerned. One really cannot have it both ways.

A declaration of the Succession of the crowne imperial of England, London, 1563. The author, John Hales, was imprisoned on account of it first in the Fleet and later in the Tower. Cf. Strype, *Annals*, II. pp. 117 and 121. “Which Book”, says the lawyer, “offended highly the Queene and the nobles of England and was afterwards found to be written by Mr. Hales surnamed the clubb foote, who was clarke of the hamper, and Sir Nicholas Bacon then Lord Keeper was presumed to have had a principal part in the same, for which he was like to have lost his office, if Sir Antony Browne that had been chief judge of the common pleas in Queene Maries tyme would have accepted therof, when her Majestie offred the same unto him, and my Lord of Lecester earnestly exhorted him to take it, but he refused it for that he was of different religion from the state, and so Sir Nicholas Bacon remayned with the same at the great instance of Sir William Cecil now Lord Treasurer, who though he were thought privy also to the saide book, yet was the matter so wisely laid upon Hales and Bacon, as Sir William was kept free, thereby to have the more authority and grace to procure the others pardon, as he did.” *Book of Succession Part II. p. 1.*

John Leslie’s *A Defence of the honour of the right high mightie and noble Princess Marie, Queene of Scotland*, etc, 1569. This work was re-edited with changes and published in 1571 as the work of “Morgan Philippes” i.e. Philip Morgan (Allison & Rogers 453.) It is doubtless this second edition of Leslie’s work that the Lawyer refers to as Morgan’s. Sir Anthony Browne died in 1567 and Philip Morgan in 1570. The work was possibly

published under the name of the latter to prevent further ill consequences to Leslie who was in the Tower in 1571 on account of his alleged connection with the Ridolfi plot.

7. This work of Robert Highington or Heighton, however, seems never to have been published. The author, a Catholic exile and sometime, as the lawyer states, secretary to the Earl of Northumberland, is referred to in a letter of Sir Francis Englefield to Allen, Madrid, 4 September 1582 and in one of Allen to Agazzari, Rheims, 23 February 1582, Knox, *Allen* pp. 296 and 298. He died at Paris about September 1589, Cf. Englefield's letters of 24 January/3 February 1590 Cal. Dom. Eliz. Add. 1588-1625, pp. 296-298.
8. *Book of Succession*, Part II p.10.
9. Ibid.
10. Ibid. Part II, p.106.
11. No one was more conscious of this than James himself. For years he tried to persuade Elizabeth to cede to him the Lennox lands in England, as a way to overcome this obstacle to his claims, and one of the first projects he took up when he succeeded to the throne was a bill for the naturalisation of the Scots, in which, however he was frustrated.
12. This, presumably, was also the view of the politicians who brought in the Hanoverians.
13. He is referring to the number of nobles and the like who had lost their lives in similar strife in England during the previous hundred years and more. Ibid. pp. 215-217
14. Ibid. Part II, p.225.
15. "A very unfavourable impression had been produced on all the dignitaries of the Curia here in regard to the Book of the English succession as though it had been written solely to support the claim of his Majesty of Spain and expressly to oppose that of the King of Scotland; . . . It is understood that the chief instrument in creating this impression in the Curia has been Monsignor Malvasia who was Nuncio in Flanders and received reports from Paget, Liggons, Tresham and other Englishmen of that faction, through a certain Doctor Gifford, who had recently been made Dean of Lille, a man who was highly prejudiced in these matters and who was living at that time in Mgr Malvasia's house. The Monsignor came to Rome primed with these reports which had been made to him in Flanders, and making use of those which they proceeded to send afterwards, he has continued the same line of action; and as he found the atmosphere favourable for what was then being attempted on behalf of France, it is not to be wondered at if reports of this kind found acceptance." Persons to Juan de Idiaquez, Rome, 1 May 1597, West. Arch. VI. n.32. In the latter part of the quotation Persons is referring to the ratification by the Pope of the absolution of Henry IV of France, which actually took place in the September of that year 1595. According to Mgr. Peña it was not only in Rome that Gifford caused the book to be denounced but also in Vienna, Florence, France, England and Scotland, Peña's Papers Bib. Vat. Lat 6227, f.75.
16. He refers to this translation in his letter to Juan de Idiaquez, Valladolid 2 September 1596, Simancas, Est. Leg. 839 f. 138.
17. "Allen says the Bishop (Cassano) causes him no end of trouble, because although he is a man of good life, his ambition and want of tact are terrible." Olivares to Philip II, Rome, 22 February 1588, Spanish Calendar p.212.
18. Gifford to Thomas Throgmorton, 5/15 June 1595, Dom Eliz. 252 n. 66,1, enclosed in a letter of Thomas Phelippes to Burghley, 12/22 June 1595, Ibid. n.66. Gifford's

letter is partly in cipher of which only one page of the original is extant (f. 151.) But the decipher of Phelippes can be checked from other letters of Gifford such as that to Malvasia. The original letter was intercepted by Dutch Calvinists and sent on to the English Government. It was copied then by some Catholic gentlemen and sent to Spain and is quoted by the Nuncio there in his despatch of 30 December of the same year 1595. Cf. *infra* note. 22.

2. Creswell to Clement VIII, Madrid, 13 August 1594: to a Cardinal, Madrid, 13 August 1594. Vat. Arch. Borghese II 448 ab. f.399.
3. Englefield's Judgement on the Book of Succession, Stonyhurst, Anglia II, n.21. A copy of this paper was evidently enclosed in his letter to Clement VIII, Valladolid, 2 September 1596, R.O. Transcripts 9 bundle 111.
4. This was the contention of all connected with the book. "Questi giorni passati si ha scritto un libro della successione del regno d'Inghilterra et delli tituli et pretensioni di diverse persone alla corona, dopo la morte di questi reyna, ponendo con tutta la indifferenza possibile lo che si puo dire pro et contra ciascuno delli pretendenti." Creswell to Clement VIII. Madrid, 13 August 1584. Vat. Arch. Borghese II 448 ab. f. 399. "Ipsumque esse librum docte admodum et accurate scriptum, prudenter etiam atque moderate, ita ut neminem jure offendere lectio ejus possit, cum nihil certi in partem ullam statuatur aut definiatur, sed argumentis tantum utrinque allatis atque ventilatis, controversiam arbitrio lectoris terminandam relinquatur." Englefield's Judgement ut supra. "Ni si repara en esto si no que a parte si dicen las racones que ay para todos pro et contra." Persons to Aquaviva, Valladolid 4 June 1594 Arch. S.J. Rom Tolet. Epp. ad. Gen, f.125. "And although this book has been written with all moderation and impartiality which could be exercised in the case of a subject of that sort, and though it prejudices nobody, yet because the book set forth many arguments to support the claims his Majesty and his children, among other claimants, are able in various ways to make to the said crown, the men of this party have been unable to swallow their wrath and so they have taken steps to discredit and misrepresent the book—as all are aware—to the Pope and other princes and with such as they could of the English nation, both in England and abroad." Persons' paper on the Morgan-Paget faction, 30 June 1597, enclosed in his letter to Juan de Idiaquez, Rome, 3 July 1597, West Arch. VI nn, 41 and 42. Cf. also Persons to the Earl of Angus, Rome, 24 January 1590 R.O. Scotland, Eliz. 66, n.4. and Persons' reply to Dr Pierce's comments on Persons' letter to Holt, Genoa, 15 March 1597, West. Arch. VI, n.17 ad 4^m, and his *Briefve Apologie*, f. 187.
5. Cajetan, Patriarch of Alexandria, to Aldobrandino, Madrid, 30 December 1595, Vat. Arch. Nunz. di Spagna 46, f. 788.
6. Aquaviva to Persons, Rome, 30 March 1594, Arch S.J. Rom. R. Tolet, Epp. Gen. f. 125
7. Persons to Aquaviva, Madrid 4 June. Arch. S.J. Rom. Hisp. 136. f.362. There is a postscript of the 16 June which does not concern the subject. The letter is in Spanish with the names in cipher but the signification of each is written above the figure, presumably after it reached Rome.
8. Creswell to Clement VIII, Madrid, 13 August 1594 and to a Cardinal (Aldobrandino?) of the same date, Vat. Arch. Borghese II 448 ab. ff. 398 and 399.
9. Persons to Juan de Idiaquez, Rome, 1 May 1597, West. Arch. VI. n.32.

27. 23 Eliz. c.2.
28. Cf. "A letter from Mary Queen of Scots to the Duke of Guise," Ed. J.H. Pollen S.J. Scottish Historical Society, Edinburgh, 1903, pp. XIV ff. Cf. also, Quadra to Philip II, London, 17 October and 30 November 1562, Spanish Calendar, pp. 262 and 273. Queen Elizabeth's sickness was the occasion for the publication of J. Hales' book, advocating the claims of Catherine Grey.
29. Cf. P.F. Tytler, *The History of Scotland*, Edinburgh 1866, Vol. VII, pp. 310 ff. and VIII, pp. 11 ff.
30. Lethington's Account of Negotiations with Elizabeth in September and October 1561, printed by Pollen, op. cit. (see note 28), spelling modernised.
31. "The opinion and judgement of C.A. before his death, concerning the late printed Booke of Succession of England and certayne poyntes therunto apperteyning," Arch. English College, Valladolid. The paper is signed B.S. which C. Greene S.J., the seventeenth century copyist, took to be Baines who had been secretary for English to the Cardinal.
32. Cf. "Sir Robert Cecil, Father Persons and the Succession 1600-1601," in *Archivum Historicum S.J.* January-June 1955, pp. 95-139.
33. "And if in these points I be satisfied, that ye have power to give them full assurance of my favour especially to Mr Secretary (Sir Robert Cecil) who is king there in effect." Instructions of James VI of Scotland to the Earl of Mar and Mr. Edward Bruce, his ambassadors at the court of Queen Elizabeth, 8 April 1601, printed in "The Secret Correspondence of Sir Robert Cecil with King James VI of Scotland," *Collectanea Adamantæa*, Ed. E. Goldsmith, Edinburgh, 1887. On the title-page of this book it has "now first published"; but in point of fact, the whole contents of the book were published by Lord Hailes a century earlier in his *Correspondence of Sir Robert Cecil with James VI*, Edinburgh, 1766.
Compare with James' opinion as to the position of Cecil that of H. Garnet S.J. in a letter from England but a fortnight after James' Instructions: "All the nobility fawn upon him (Sir Robert Cecil) and stand in fear of him: in a word Cecil is king." Garnet to (Persons?), 16 April 1601, Arch. S.J. Rom. Ang. 30, II, ff. 182-183.
34. This is a fault in *James VI of Scotland and the Throne of England*, by Helena Georgia Stafford, New York, 1940, which otherwise shows considerable objective research.
35. Persons to A. Standen, Madrid, 8 September 1595, Stonyhurst, Coll. P. 310
36. Persons to Crichton, Madrid, 2 November 1596, Stonyhurst, Coll. P. 318. Cf. also Persons to Crichton, Madrid, 10 May 1596, *ibid.* 316 and Persons to the Earl of Angus, Rome, 24 January 1600, R.O. Scotland, Eliz. 66, n. 4. The book mentioned was the *Book of Succession*.
37. Persons to Holt, Genoa, 15 March 1597, West. Arch. VI, n.17.
38. As the Cecilian party had done.
39. Persons to Sesa, Rome, 30 June (vere July) 1600, Simancas. Est. Leg. 972. Cf. also The Confession of John Snowden (Cecil) 21 May 1591, R.O. Dom Eliz. 238, n.160: "The commission that Persons gave me at my departure . . . was that I should among all Catholics publish that the Spaniards meant no conquest but reformation of religion."

40. T. Fitzherbert, *A Defence of the Catholique Cause*, 1602 (Allison & Rogers 310), spelling in the quotation modernised. This was written in Rome as a prefix to his *Apolo-
gie* composed in Spain in 1599, the publication of which, he says, he postponed until he should see the issue of the negotiations for peace between England and Spain. Cf. also T. Fitzherbert to Sterril, Madrid, 1 March 1599, Dom. Cal. Eliz. 1598-1601, p. 164: "You want to be satisfied whether the King of Spain will pretend himself (to the crown). I protest that not only his father but now he gives as great assurance in that behalf as may be desired; we assure him that if he does he will never prevail."
41. Cajetan to Aldobrandino, Madrid, 30 December 1595, Vat. Arch. Nunz. di Spagna 46 f. 788: "Quanto più che io et tutti gli principali Catholici d'Inghilterra stanno satisfati che S. Maestà non pretende ni pretenderà gia mai di tener quel regno per se ni di unirlo alla corona di Spagna, ma che si ponga un re Catholico a content della medesima natione per mano di S. Santità et sua."
42. J. Creswell to Clement VIII, Madrid, 13 August 1594 ut supra.
43. "I am fully occupied, partly in the business of the college and partly in putting into Latin the Book of Succession, so that his Holiness and whoever he may commission may examine it if necessary." Persons to Juan de Idiaquez, Valladolid, 2 September 1596, Simancas, Est. Leg. 839, f. 138.
44. Persons to Juan de Idiaquez, Rome, 1 May 1597, West. Arch. VI. n.32.
45. "Brevis Relatio," an account written by one of the four Appellant priests in Rome of the proceedings there, printed in T.G. Law, *The Archpriest Controversy*, Camden Society, 1898, vol. II, p. 52.
46. Cf. Persons to Crichton, Seville, 10 May 1596, answering a letter of Crichton, no longer extant, of 20 January 1596: Stonyhurst, Coll. P. 316: Crichton to Persons, 20 August 1596, *ibid.* 318: Persons to Crichton, Madrid, 2 November 1596, *ibid.* 318: Earl of Angus to Crichton, Edinburgh, 4 November (1598 or 1599): Arch. S.J. Rom. Anglia 42, f. 203: and Persons to the Earl of Angus, Rome, 24 January 1600, R.O. Scotland, Eliz. 66, n.4.
47. "Lo 3º que aviendo el Rey de Escocia comencado ya a descubrir su intencion de darse por Catholico a imitacion de Vandome y ganado una parcialidad de Ingleses tanto en Flandes como en Roma y escrito cartas particulares a algunos de los principales dellos como al Conde de Vestmorland y a Carlos Paget, y a otros por el Baron Pury Ogilby que al presente esta en esta corte y demas aviendo tratado dello con algunos principes de Italia poco aficionados a las cosas de España y ganado como se piensa algunos Cardinales en Roma, y principalmente las personas que estan mas cerca de su Santidad etc." Creswell, Englefield and Persons giving reports from England of March, April and May 1596, Simancas, Est. Leg. 967. On James pretending to be leaning towards Catholicism cf. J. Petit to Peter Halins (Thomas Phelippes), Brussels, 19/29 April 1597, Dom. Cal. Eliz. 1595-1597, p. 390. An answer to the *Book of Succession* was produced by the Scotch faction among the English exiles in Flanders. It was written by Henry Constable. (See Biographical Studies, ii. 4. 286).
48. Cf. Avisos de Londres, 21 December 1596, Simancas, Est. Leg. 611, n. 189: T. Phelippes to Essex, 9 December 1596, Cal. Salisbury Mss. VI, p. 513: Pury Ogilvy to Sir Robert Cecil, 14 December 1600, 13 February 1601 and 4 July 1601, Thorpe, *Calendar*

- of *State Papers relating to Scotland*, II, pp. 791, 793 and 799.
49. One of these was J. Morton S.J. released in 1595, The other was probably James Gordon in the same year. Later (in 1598) Christie was also allowed to go free.
 50. Persons to Crichton, Madrid, 2 November 1596, Stonyhurst, Coll. P. 318.
 51. P.F. Tytler, *op. cit.* vol. IX pp. 258-259.
 52. Cf. The Report of R. Abercromby S.J. 1602, Arch. S.J. Rom. Anglia 42 ff. 151 & 156 and A. MacQuhirrie S.J. to Aquaviva, Edinburgh, 25 February 1601 *ibid.* f. 135.
 53. Nicholson to Sir Robert Cecil, 12 January 1600, R.O.S.P. Scot. LXVI, n.3. Cf. also his despatch of 15 May 1600 *ibid.* n.27.
 54. Cf. John Snowden (Cecil) to Sir Robert Cecil, (30 December) 1594, erroneously calendared under 1595, Dom. Cal. Eliz. 1595-1597, p. 145: H. Thirkhall to Burghley, 2 May 1594, Dom. Cal. Eliz. 1591-1594. pp. 496-497: W. Gifford to T. Throgmorton 5/15 June 1595, enclosed in Philippes letter to Burghley, 12/22 June 1595, *ut supra*.
 55. Report sent on from Antwerp, 30 December 1595, Simancas, Est. Leg. 967: Englefield to Philip II, Madrid, 26 March 1596, English College Valladolid Ser. II Leg. 1. This letter has been ascribed to Persons but internal evidence clearly shows that he was not the writer.
 56. Cf. Proclamations: of 1 March 1568, 1 July 1570, 14 November 1570, 28 September 1563, 26 March 1574 and the 12 October 1584. The error of those writers who posit this imaginary special law, may owe its origin to an assertion of a royalist pamphleteer in 1648. In the February of that year Henry Walker, the publicist of Oliver Cromwell, published his *Several Speeches delivered at a Conference Concerning the Power of Parliaments to proceed against the King for misgovernment*. This book was soon detected by the royalist pamphleteer to be a pirated edition of the Book of Succession. In his pamphlet *The King's Most Gracious Messages for Peace and a Personal Treaty*, published in May of the same year, he wrote of Walker's work: "Now there is no difference betwixt this book published by this parliament and that of the Jesuite, condemned by that other 35 Eliz. etc." intimating that the Book of Succession was condemned by the Parliament of 1593. This was an error, for by 1593 the book had not yet been published. Cf. T.B. Williams (Muddiman); "Puritan Piracies of Father Persons' Conference," *The Month*, March 1911. p.274.
 57. E.g. Rowland Jenks, Stephen Vallenger, William Carter, Thomas Alfield and James Duckett. Three of these suffered the death penalty.
 58. Rowland Whyte to Sir Robert Sydney, the court, 5 November 1595 and Robert Beale to the same, 25 September 1595, printed in A. Collins, *Letters and Memorials of State* (Sydney Papers), London, 1746, I. pp. 358 and 350.
 59. Rowland Whyte to Sir Robert Sydney, 5 November 1595 *ut supra*.
 60. Rowland Whyte to Sir Robert Sydney, London, 12 November 1595, *ibid.* p. 360.
 61. Memorandum of Sir Thomas Heneage to Burghley by her Majesty's special commission 10 July 1595, Cal. Salisbury Mss. V. p. 273: Rowland Whyte to Sir Robert Sydney, London 20 October, 7 November and 12 November 1595, Hist. Mss. Com. Report on Papers of Lord de L'Isle and Dudley, II, pp. 177, 183 and 184: The Queen to the Lord Keeper and Lord Buckhurst, 3 January 1596, Cal. Dom. Eliz. 1595-1597, p. 159.
 62. The story of Williamsom can be traced in the Cal. Dom. Eliz. 1595-1597. His answers

- to the questions about the succession are dated 21 June 1595, just a few days after Philippes' letter to Burghley, enclosing the decipher of Gifford's to Thomas Throgmorton. Cf. Cal. Salisbury Mss. V. pp. 251-254.
3. In 1591 Peter Wentworth got into trouble over a pamphlet on the succession, possibly the same that was published in 1598 after his death: *A Pithie Exhortation to Her Majestie for Establishing her Successors to the Crowne*. Cf. Wentworth to Burghley with enclosure, 27 September 1591, Dom. Cal. Eliz. 1591-1594, p. 107. In 1593 he was in trouble again for endeavouring with others to raise the question in Parliament and for this was imprisoned in the Tower where he remained until his death in 1596. Cf. D'Ewes *Journals of all the Parliaments during the reigne of Queen Elizabeth*, London, 1682 p. 470.
4. *Book of Succession*, Part II, p. 258.
5. Really grand son-in-law.
6. Report passed on from Antwerp 30 December 1595, Simancas, Est. Leg. 967.
7. "Kennett mentions a paper of intelligence out of Spain advising that Fr. Persons had received above 300 letters out of England in applause and approbation of the *Book of Succession*, that my Ld. Chief Justice found in the said book nothing seditious or treasonable, and so dismissed the merchants that brought them in, that the Catholics after the book once seen, made search in the Tower and found certain records confirming greatly the exceptions against Katherine Swinfords' issue." This note I discovered among certain transcripts of A. Jessop in my possession. Unfortunately I have not been able to find the reference for the alleged statement of Kennett.
8. Persons to Crichton, 2 November 1596, Stonyhurst, Coll. P. 318. Cf. also his *Briefe Apologie*, f. 187.
9. "Non è stato grande la persecutione dopo che fu stampato il libro della succeSSIONE." Extract from his letter of 23 November 1596, Arch. S.J. Rom. Angl. 38, f. 199.
10. Englefield's Judgement on the Book of Succession, Stonyhurst, Anglia II, n.21.
1. At this time, it must be remembered, the ministers of Elizabeth were by no means favouring the claims of James. Cf. "Sir Robert Cecil, Father Robert Persons and the Succession 1600-1601," ut supra. Cf. also, William Watson to the Attorney-General, (March or April) 1599, printed in T.G. Law, *op. cit.* I, pp. 210-226.
2. Postscript of Martin Array to his letter from Rome, 18 January 1599, printed by T.G. Law, *op. cit.* I, pp. 113-114.
3. Cf. Creswell, Englefield and Persons to the Spanish authorities, giving reports from England of March, April and May 1596, Simancas, Est. Leg. 967: La repuesta venida da Inglaterra por diversas cartas de Junio deste año 1597, Bib. Vat. Lat. 6227, ff. 40-41, of which there is another copy in Simancas. Est. Leg. 969, and William Watson to the Attorney General (March or April) 1599, ut supra.
- Eng. Coll. Valladolid Ser II, Leg. 1.: Creswell to Aldobrandino, Madrid, 22 December 1595 Vat. Arch. Borghese III, 124 g. 2, f. 78: Creswell to Clement VIII, Madrid, 13 August 1594 ibid. Borghese II. 448 ab. f. 398 and Persons to Juan de Idiaquez, Valladolid, 2 September 1596, Simancas, Est. Leg. 839, f. 138.
4. Englefield to Philip II, 36 March 1596, enclosed in a letter to Juan de Idiaquez, 26 March 1596.
5. W. Gifford to the Nuncio, Malvasia, Antwerp, 13 June 1595 enclosing the summary

which he had just made of the work after obtaining the original for a time by bribing a boy at the printers. Vat. Arch. Borghese II 448 ab. ff. 436-441. Cf. also W. Gifford to Thomas Throgmorton, 5/15 June 1595 Dom. Eliz. 252, n. 66, l. Compare with this the statement about the book of N. Williamson who had come from Flanders early in 1595 and had been captured with David Lawe in the March of that year: "Of this it was said that Persons, Owen, Fitzherbert and Verstegan were the chief advisers and the setters forth of the book now in print but not yet published." N. Williamson to Essex and Cecil, 21 June 1595, Cal. Salisbury Mss. V, p. 251.

76. Persons to Aquaviva, Madrid, 4 June 1594, Arch. S.J. Rom. Hisp. 136, f. 362, quoted above under section III.
77. Aquaviva to Crichton, Rome, 2 March 1596, Arch. S.J. Rom. Gen. ad Fland. II. f. 105.
78. "Questi giorni passati si ha scritto un libro della successione." Creswell to Clemen VIII 13 August ut supra. Cf. also Creswell to Aldobrandino, Madrid, 22 December 1595 ut supra: Creswell, Englefield and Persons in a paper giving reports from England of May April and May 1596, Simancas, Est. Leg. 967: Peña's papers, Bib. Vat. Lat 6227, f. 162. Persons in his paper on the Morgan-Paget faction, 30 June, enclosed in a letter to Juan de Idiaquez, Rome, 3 July 1597, West. Arch. VI, nn. 41 and 42: Persons answers to the comments of D. Pierce on the letter of Persons to Holt, Genoa, 15 March 1597, West. Arch. VI, nn. 20 and 21 ad 4^m and Persons to the Earl of Angus, Rome, 24 January 1600 ut supra.
79. Persons to the Earl of Angus, Rome, 24 January 1600 R.O. Scot. Eliz. 66, n.4. Cf. Persons to Crichton, Madrid, 2 November 1596: Stonyhurst, Coll. P. 318: "To this I answer in the first place that before the book was published, it had been read carefully at various times by men of English nationality, as prudent as were to be found in Spain, Italy and Belgium, and possibly in England too and that in their opinion the book was not premature but overdue and very much needed and very suited to the times so much so that nothing more useful for promoting the Catholic cause had been written up to then. And if I were to set down the names of these men no exception could be taken to them." Cf. also Persons *Briefe Apologie* f. 187.
80. Persons to Garnet, 24 May 1603 R.O. Dom. James I, vol. I. n.84. Cf. also Persons to James VI, 13 August 1602. Stonyhurst, Anglia III, n. 23: and Persons to James I, Rome, 18 October 1603, *ibid* n.36. In both of these letters, the one written before James' accession and the other after it, Persons is perfectly frank and even blunt in stating that religion was the obstacle.
- 81.. Wilson to Burghley, Antwerp, 1 February 1574, Foreign Calendar Eliz. 1575-1577 p.10. Dom. Eliz. Addenda, 1585-1625, p. 297. Cf. Englefield to Barrett, 24 January/3 February 1590 *ibid*. p. 296: and to Hopkins etc. *ibid*. 297.
82. Cf. Knox, *Allen*, *passim* but particularly the Memorandum about the succession, Rome (March) 1587, p.281.
83. Simancas, Est. Leg. 838. It may be that Nau was referring to this in his statement of 10 September 1585: "And in fact the said Queen of Scotland was advertised that many English had wholly addressed themselves to the King of Spain, proposing to him to invest himself with the crown of England, in accordance with a book and discourse which had formerly been composed about it between Sir Francis Englefield, one named Ouan, and as

- I believe, the Jesuit Persons, whereat the said Queen of Scotland was much offended." Boyd, Cal. of Scottish Papers, IX,3.
4. Englefield to William Heighington, Madrid, 24 January/3 February 1590, Cal. S.P.D. Addenda 1580-1625.
5. Wright's statement, Cal. Dom. Eliz. 1595-1597, p. 156. Wright sailed from San Sebastian, concealing his identity only until he arrived in England 8 June 1595 when he surrendered his person to Anthony Bacon, the 'right hand man' of the Earl of Essex. Cf. T. Birch op. cit. I, pp. 264 and 252. 'His examination will have been about this time. It is hardly necessary to point out that the "two years since" fits in with the time that the Book of Succession was written viz. 1593. There is an article on Wright in *Biographical Studies*, i.3. 189 et seq.
6. See note 31. I am indebted to Mgr. Henson for a copy of this document. There are three recensions: in English, Latin and Spanish. There is a copy in English, Stonyhurst, Anglia, n.17. (This volume is now at Westminster) This copy formerly was part of the dossier that Bishop Bancroft had collected at the turn of the 16th century. The person to whom Allen sent his documents is there stated to have been Francis Peto—one of the authorities mentioned in the Book of Succession. But this is clearly a mistake for Persons. There are other places in the book where Peto is named but the circumstances make it impossible that that should be the right name. The Stonyhurst document is also signed R.P. But this undoubtedly is due to an accompanying note that Gifford can prove that the document was written by Persons. The prior Valladolid document is signed B.S. which the seventeenth century copyist took to be 'Baines, secretary' and internal evidence supports this.
7. Englefield's Judgement, etc., *ut supra*, note 20. Cf. also Persons to Aquaviva 4 June 1594 *ut supra*.
8. Tierney in his edition of Dodd's *Church History*, III, pp. 31-32, note, gives five reasons for ascribing the work to Persons alone, but not one of them proves that Persons was the sole author, as E. Lucas showed. Cf. *The Tablet*, November 9, 1844. Tierney, moreover was acquainted with little, if any, of the evidence adduced above.

ORDINATIONS IN ROME. INFORMATION ON THE ENGLISH MARTYRS FROM THE ROMAN VICARIATE.

By GODFREY ANSTRUTHER O.P.

In the archives of the Vicariato di Roma are preserved the ordination books from 1505 onwards. Apart from an unfortunate gap, 1575-80, they run consecutively, but they do not by any means contain all the ordinations held in Rome. For the period 1603-25 there are 35 ordinations recorded in the *Liber Ruber* of the English College, Rome, which are not given in these books, and the reason is not clear. These books are not numbered, but are known by the year with which they begin. The only ones that concern us here are: (i) 1580-88; (ii) 1588-95; (iii) 1596-1601; (iv) 1602-08; (v) 1609-17; and an odd volume (which I here call Vic. 6) giving supplementary ordinations 1590-1612. After 1618 there are two series, *Generales* and *Particulares*, but the distinction is not rightly adhered to. The *ordinationes generales* were on the four Ember Saturdays and were invariably in the Lateran, the parish church of Rome. Then as now, orders were normally conferred by the vice-gerent, delegated by the cardinal-vicar. This office was held by Thomas Goldwell, exiled bishop of St Asaph, till his death in 1585 and nearly all orders, not only those of English students, were conferred by him. Later a few were conferred by Owen Lewis, Welsh bishop of Casano, and later still (especially for the English College) by cardinal Bellarmine. The *ordinationes particulares* were also sometimes in the Lateran, but mostly elsewhere. Goldwell ordained at S. Silvestro in Monte Quirinale, but more often in the chapel of the English College, even when no English students were involved. Until about 1600 the tonsure and the four minor orders were conferred on different days (usually fairly close together) but after 1600 there is a tendency to confer them all at once.

These volumes are not paginated but the date of ordination is a sufficiently accurate reference. In the earlier volumes, when a student received the tonsure the entry normally gives the christian names of both his parents, as well as the diocese of origin, and these facts are extremely valuable for the genealogist. After 1600 however these details are still given for the Italians but never for the students at the English and German colleges.

For ordinations before 1600 the date given in the *Liber Ruber* is not always in agreement with the books, but after that date I have always found them exact. cf. Newport, below. It would serve no useful purpose to reproduce the brave attempts of

the Italian secretary to latinise the barbarous English names. Some are quite unrecognisable without reference to the *Liber Ruber*. Sometimes English students are given as students of the German College, and to add to the confusion, once it became normal for all the students to assume an *alias*, this became the name under which they received orders.

The extracts below, relating solely to the Martyrs, give only such details as are not to be found in the *Liber Ruber*. The number after the name is the page reference to the *Liber Ruber* (CRS. XXXVII); the date after the names of the parents is intended as a reference, but is in fact the date when the student received the first tonsure. I have not attempted to give the dates of the other orders (though they are often to be found) but only of priesthood. Where there is no record of priesthood I have given the date of the diaconate. Two of these martyrs, though ordained in Rome were not students of the *Venerabile*. Lat. stands for Lateran, and VEC for the Ven. English College.

BLIMOND, John (103)
s. of Thomas & Alice. Given for his
brother Oliver, 15 aug. 82. ord. Lat.

AYLES, Christopher (45)
s. of John & Catherine, 30 oct. 83

BLIXTON, Christopher (50)
ord. Lat.

BORNELIUS, John (19)
diacon, 10 oct. 81

BUKE, Edmund (52)
loc. of Canterbury. ord. Lat.

CART, William (12)
ord. VEC, 5 Feb. 81

CHAMBERFORD, Thomas (25)
s. of Edward & Olive, 28 oct. 80

INGRAM, John (55)
s. of Richard & Anne, 13 dec. 84
ord. Lat.

JAMES, Edward (22)
ord. VEC, 30 oct. 83

LACEY, William (none)
s. of Robert & Elizabeth, 15 feb. 81
ord. VEC, 5 mar. 81, by Goldwell

LAMBTON, Joseph (70)
ord. Lat. 28 mar. 92 (Vic. 6)

LEIGH, Richard (39)
s. of Valentine & Catherine, 20 mar. 83
ord. Lat. 16 feb. 86

LOCKWOOD, John (99)
s. of Christopher & Clare, 25 aug. 96
ord. Lat.

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LOW, John (32) (called Long)
s. of Simon & Margaret, 13 dec. 81

MIDDLETON, Robert (105)
ord. German College, 4 jan 98

MORSE, Henry (189)
deacon, 25 july 1620

MUNDEN, John (none)
deacon, 24 mar. 82

NEWPORT, Richard (99) (called
Smith) s. of John & Anne, 25 aug. 96
ord. Lat. 10 april 1599 (NB)

OLDCORN, Edward (35)
s. of John & Elizabeth, 15 aug. 82
ord. Lat. 23 aug. 87

PLASDEN, Polidore (56)
ord. Lat.

PORMORT, Thomas (27)
s. of Gregory & Anne, 27 aug. 81
ord. Lat. 23 aug. 87

THULES, John (71)
ord. Lat. 28 mar. 92 (Vic. 6)

THWING, Edward (63)
s. of Thomas & "Joi", 27 nov. 88

WATKINSON, Robert (115)
s. of John & Anne, 24 sept. 1600

WHITE, Eustace (59)
deacon, 16 april 88

